

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 11908 281802Z
ACTION SS-25

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INFO AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 11908

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY) WG WB
SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL VISIT: GERMAN PARTICIPATION
AT ERBENHEIM PROGRAM

REFS: (A) STATE 163627; (B) BONN 11634

1. WE CONVEYED TO FONOFF WASHINGTON'S WISH NOT TO
INVITE APPROXIMATELY 1,000 ADDITIONAL GERMANS TO THE
ERBENHEIM PROGRAM (REF A) AND SUBSEQUENTLY RECEIVED A
STRONG REACTION FROM THE CHANCELLERY.

2. CHANCELLERY STATED THAT CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT'S
EXPRESSED WISH TO HIS STAFF PRIOR TO LEAVING FOR AFRICA
WAS TO ENSURE ADEQUATE GERMAN PRESENCE AT THE
ERBENHEIM/WIESBADEN MILITARY PROGRAM. IN THE
CHANCELLERY VIEW, THIS MEANS BOTH CIVILIAN AND MILITARY
PARTICIPATION. THE CHANCELLERY THEN EXPRESSED THEIR
"ASTONISHMENT" AT THE IDEA OF IN EFFECT ELIMINATING
GERMAN CIVILIAN PARTICIPATION FROM THIS PROGRAM. THEY
WANT TO BE IN A POSITION BY THE TIME THE CHANCELLOR
RETURNS FROM AFRICA JUNE 30 TO BE ABLE TO
EXPLAIN TO HIM THE REASONS FOR THIS PREFERENCE, BELIEVING
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THAT HE WILL RAPIDLY WANT TO FOCUS PERSONALLY ON THIS
MATTER.

3. THE FRG ALSO STATES THAT, IN THEIR VIEW, SECURITY
IS NOT A SERIOUS CONSIDERATION IN EITHER
PERMITTING OR LIMITING A GERMAN CIVILIAN ATTENDANCE
FROM NEIGHBORING TOWNS, SINCE SUCH ATTENDANCE

WOULD BE BY INVITATION AND SCREENED FOR SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS.

4. THE FRG ALSO REHEARSED FOR US EARLIER THINKING (SET FORTH IN REF B) RELATING TO THE IMPORTANCE THEY ATTACH TO HAVING A SIGNIFICANT GERMAN PRESENCE AT THE ERBENHEIM EVENT, SAYING THIS WAS NOT JUST A MATTER OF POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS RELATING TO THE FRG CHANCELLOR, BUT ALSO IMPORTANT TO ENSURE AN ATMOSPHERE OF BEING "IN GERMANY AND NOT IN AMERICA" DURING THIS PORTION OF THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT.

5. WE BELIEVE THIS HAS THE MAKINGS OF A SIGNIFICANT PROBLEM, AND THAT THE CHANCELLOR'S STAFF IS ACCURATE IN CONVEYING BOTH THE CHANCELLOR'S EXPRESSED INTEREST IN THE MATTER, AS WELL AS HIS INTEREST IN FOCUSING ON IT WHEN HE RETURNS TO BONN FROM AFRICA.

6. FOR THE REASONS OUTLINED IN REF (B) AS WELL AS THE REACTIONS NOTED ABOVE, WE REQUEST THAT WASHINGTON RECONSIDER ITS POSITION ON GERMAN CIVILIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE ERBENHEIM PROGRAM AND AGREE TO A LATITUDE FOR INVITATIONS TO APPROXIMATELY 1,000 GERMAN CIVILIANS FROM THE SURROUNDING WIESBADEN/MAINZ AREA. IF THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE, WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A RATIONALE TO PRESENT TO THE CHANCELLERY BY JUNE 29 AT THEIR
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SPECIFIC REQUEST.
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